

WASHINGTON, DC – All seven members of Connecticut's congressional delegation Thursday urged President Obama to visit the state and observe first-hand the devastation caused by Hurricane Irene.

In a letter to the President, the delegation cited major flooding caused by five Connecticut rivers, coastal surge, and wave damage to support the case for an emergency declaration for the state.

"We urge you to visit Connecticut to see the damage this storm has caused," the letter stated. "We are certain that your visit will lift the spirits of the thousands of residents who are struggling with recovery from the destruction inflicted by this storm."

Additionally, the delegation urged all Connecticut residents to report damage to their homes or businesses to the state's free, emergency information line at 2-1-1 or online at www.211ct.org . Comprehensive damage reporting will help the state's request for the federal disaster declaration.

Below is a copy of the letter to the President:

September 1, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama, We understand that you will soon visit New Jersey to see first-hand the impact of Hurricane Irene on that State and write today to request that you also consider visiting Connecticut to tour the impacted areas in our state and meet with local officials to discuss disaster assistance.

Our Governor has submitted a request for an expedited major disaster declaration that we strongly support and believe it is important for you to come see the devastating damage caused to individuals, families, businesses and others throughout the State.

As with other neighboring states, Hurricane Irene devastated parts of Connecticut and left many of our residents displaced, under water and without power. The Connecticut, Housatonic, Farmington, Pomperaug and Pequabuck Rivers have experienced major flooding. Additionally, Hurricane Irene's forceful winds pushed water into the western Long Island Sound resulting in coastal flooding, wave damage and erosion which damaged or destroyed numerous homes, public beaches and other public and private facilities. At one time over 900,000 customers were without electricity, a new historic outage level. Downed trees closed over 1,000 local roads and 65 state roads. During the disaster, shelters housed over 2,000 residents. Preliminary surveys by local officials in those areas that are reachable have discovered over 7,300 homes with some degree of damage. Connecticut has already been hard hit by the economic downturn and previously declared disasters.

We commend you for the administration's response to this dangerous storm and for your personal involvement throughout. We urge you to visit Connecticut to see the damage this storm has caused. We are certain that your visit will lift the spirits of the thousands of residents who are struggling with recovery from the destruction inflicted by this storm.

We look forward to working with you as the response effort moves forward. Thank you for your kind consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Joseph I. Lieberman, U.S. Senate
Richard Blumenthal, U.S. Senate
Rosa DeLauro, Member of Congress
John Larson, Member of Congress
Joseph Courtney, Member of Congress
Chris Murphy, Member of Congress
Jim Himes, Member of Congress

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